injections which cost as high as rupees 2000 in one case; and

(c) if so, the remedial steps taken/being taken to meet this ugly situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) It is a fact that stray dogs cannot be eliminated under the prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. To control the menace of stray dogs in the streets, the Government have implemented the scheme for Birth Control and Immunization of Stray Dogs during the year 94—99.

**Scholarship for OBC Higher Medical Studies**

3038. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of loans/loan-scholarship scheme to finance higher medical/dental studies of OBC students intending to study/studying in recongnised private colleges; and

(b) the details of amount sanctioned since inception of these schemes for scholarship and loan separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation had formulated a scheme 'AAKANKSHA' in 1996-97 as pilot scheme for providing loan to eligible members of Backward Classes for pursuing higher Professional and Technical courses including medicine in different Professional/Technical recognised institutes.

(b) The Corporation has sanctioned Rs. 9,37,880/- to 15 candidates for education loan.

**Role of NGO for Senior Citizens**

3039. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes/projects launched/contemplated on the occasion of International Year for the elderly people by Government; and

(b) what is/would be the role of NGOs in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) The year 1999 has been declared as the international year of Older Persons by the United Nations. During the year 1999-2000, higher allocation has been proposed and expansion will be undertaken of this Ministry's Schemes to provide financial assistance to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for construction and maintenance of Old Age Homes, Day Care Centres and Mobile Medicare Units for Older Persons.

**Exploitation of Tribals by Private Traders**

3040. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of growing exploitation of tribals by private traders in the tribal areas of Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether the State as well as Central level tribal co-operative societies are not able to give due protection to the tribals;

(c) if so, the steps taken to save the tribals from exploitation; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.